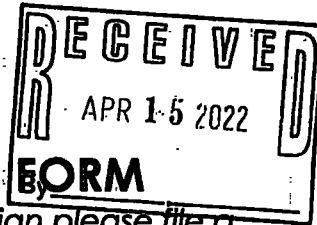


ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD
1740 W. ADAMS ST., SUITE 4600, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
PHONE (602) 364-1PET (1738) FAX (602) 364-1039
VETBOARD.AZ.GOV



COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION FORM

If there is an issue with more than one veterinarian please file a separate Complaint Investigation Form for each veterinarian

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: April 15, 2022

Case Number: 22-120

A. THIS COMPLAINT IS FILED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING:

Name of Veterinarian/CVT: Nicole Avci (License #7765)

Premise Name: Vistancia Animal Hospital

Premise Address: 28570 N El Mirage Rd #104

City: Peoria State: AZ Zip Code: 85383

Telephone: (623) 888-8108

B. INFORMATION REGARDING THE INDIVIDUAL FILING COMPLAINT*:

Name: Kalah Siegel

Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED]

Zip Code: [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: [REDACTED] Cell Telephone: [REDACTED]

*STATE LAW REQUIRES WE HAVE TO DISCLOSE YOUR NAME UNLESS WE CAN SHOW THAT DISCLOSURE WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL HARM TO YOU, SOMEONE ELSE OR THE PUBLIC PER A.R.S. § 41-1010. IF YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SUBSTANTIAL HARM WILL RESULT IN DISCLOSURE OF YOUR NAME PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES OF RESTRAINING ORDERS OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.

C. PATIENT INFORMATION (1):

Name: Mishu
Breed/Species: Domestic Short Hair / Feline
Age: 11 Sex: Male Color: Black

PATIENT INFORMATION (2):

Name: _____
Breed/Species: _____
Age: _____ Sex: _____ Color: _____

D. VETERINARIANS WHO HAVE PROVIDED CARE TO THIS PET FOR THIS ISSUE:

Please provide the name, address and phone number for each veterinarian.

Dr. Jucan, Arizona Veterinary Dental Specialists
7823 W. Golden Lane, Peoria, AZ 85345
602-942-1486

Arizona Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Center (AVECCC)
7823 W. Golden Lane, Peoria, AZ 85345
480-462-1700

E. WITNESS INFORMATION:

Please provide the name, address and phone number of each witness that has direct knowledge regarding this case.

Holly Holland, Professional Pet Sitter: [REDACTED]
The Trilogy at Vistancia Resident

Astin Deem, Practice Manager at Vistancia Animal Hospital: [REDACTED] (cell)
Jason Long (License #6749), Interim Medical Director at Vistancia Animal Hospital
28570 N. El Mirage Rd., Ste. 104, Peoria, AZ 85383
623-888-8108 (Vistancia Animal Hospital)

Attestation of Person Requesting Investigation

By signing this form, I declare that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Further, I authorize the release of any and all medical records or information necessary to complete the investigation of this case.

Signature: Kalah Siegel

Date: 4/14/2022

F. ALLEGATIONS and/or CONCERNS:

Please provide all information that you feel is relevant to the complaint. This portion must be either typewritten or clearly printed in ink.

Please see attached document.

Complaint Investigation Form - Mishu Siegel

Cont.

F. ALLEGATIONS and/or CONCERNS:

Please provide all information that you feel is relevant to the complaint. This portion must be either typewritten or clearly printed in ink.

1. On March 3, 2022 Vistancia Animal Hospital ("the Hospital") accepted the responsibility of providing adequate, professional veterinarian services for my cat, Mishu.
2. While in the Hospital's care, Nicole Avci (License #7765) was the primary caretaker.
3. Previous to Mishu's admittance into the Hospital, he appeared to be suffering from severe pain and discomfort around his mouth and jaw. His jaw was chattering, he was having trouble eating, and he was drooling excessively. (Videos available in Documentation Folder) All of these symptoms were reported to the Hospital and Dr. Avci.
4. Mishu was brought to Vistancia Hospital by Holly Holland, Mishu's pet sitter. I was in New York on business, and Holly—a highly-regarded professional cat sitter in the Peoria area—was caring for Mishu. I immediately changed my flight to come back to Arizona as soon as possible once Mishu was admitted to the Hospital.
5. Holly treated Mishu as her own with extensive care and attention while I was on my business trip—before, during, and after his admittance to the Hospital. I FaceTimed with Holly and Mishu multiple times a day, including while Mishu was at Vistancia Animal Hospital being seen by Dr. Avci. Holly witnessed the "care" Mishu received in person, and I witnessed it via FaceTime.
6. Mishu was expeditiously "cared for" at Vistancia Animal Hospital. In hindsight, the minimal amount of time spent taking care of Mishu should have been the first sign that the Hospital had mishandled his care.
7. Dr. Avci allegedly performed an "oral exam" on Mishu and could not definitively give a diagnoses. She *guessed* that he needed to have several teeth extracted but could not say conclusively what was causing him such intense pain, let alone how many, or which teeth, allegedly needed extraction.
8. Dr. Avci and the Hospital wasted no time handing over an estimate for "dental prophylaxis—Grade 4/4—extractions likely." Of course, I didn't think twice about accepting this conclusion and agreeing to pay any amount if it meant Mishu feeling better.

9. Despite seeing Mishu in excruciating pain, and guessing that he needed multiple teeth extracted, Dr. Avci and the Hospital scheduled Mishu for surgery a full week later. There was no sense of urgency.
10. Not once was it ever suggested that Mishu should seek care elsewhere in order to expedite the timeline to surgery, despite his clear suffering.
11. Based on my faith in Vistancia Animal Hospital and Dr. Avci, I accepted Mishu back into Holly's care, assuming that the source of his pain was non-serious and manageable, given there was absolutely no urgency to schedule him for surgery.
12. In the meantime, Dr. Avci sent Mishu home with a handful of Buprenorphine syringes for the pain.
13. Despite the pain medication, Mishu's symptoms did not improve and in fact worsened, exposing him to severe pain and discomfort.
14. I called Vistancia Animal Hospital within 24 hours of Mishu being released, to ask if Holly could administer the pain medication more frequently than was directed. I expressed to them that Mishu was suffering and in pain, despite the pain medication they prescribed.
15. Upon calling reception, I was told that Dr. Avci's was notified of my concern and that her response was that Holly could administer pain medication every six hours at minimum, though closer to eight hours was still preferred. My call in no way resulted in Vistancia Animal Hospital comprehending that the medication was not working and that my cat was in extreme pain.
16. It became clear to Holly and me that Mishu could not endure the pain he was experiencing for a full week until his appointment at Vistancia Animal Hospital for dental surgery.
17. Later, after normal business hours, both Holly and I called Arizona Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Center (AVECCC) multiple times, asking if someone was available for emergency dental surgery. There was no one available at AVECCC for dental surgery at that time, but they recommended calling Arizona Veterinary Dental Specialists when the office opened.
18. We were operating under Dr. Avci's conclusion that Mishu needed dental extractions, not that his pain could be related to anything else.
19. The next day, on March 4, 2022 Holly brought Mishu to Arizona Veterinary Dental Specialists, who were kind enough to fit him into their schedule at the end of the day.

After Mishu was admitted it became immediately clear the gravity of his condition, and the grossly incorrect diagnoses that was provided by Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital.

20. Specifically, it was revealed that Mishu (a tiny cat weighing less than 7 pounds) had a lesion underneath his tongue that was more than an inch long and more than a half-inch deep. (Photos available in Documentation Folder)
21. Based upon the gravity of his condition, Mishu was required to undergo immediate emergency surgery, which involved the use of anesthesia, treatment of the lesion in his mouth, stitching of the wound, the installation of a feeding tube, and pain management. Plus, debris was found in the lesion which was sent to a lab for further investigation.
22. Not only did Dr. Jucan and her team at Arizona Veterinary Dental Specialists collectively decide to stay late on a Friday evening after the office closed to treat Mishu, but Mishu's condition and the treatment he received required him to be admitted overnight to the neighboring Arizona Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Center (AVECCC).
23. The emergency services that night cost \$3,802.00. All of which was duly paid. An additional visit to AVECCC a few days later cost \$453.86, which was also duly paid.
24. If it weren't for the grossly incorrect diagnoses provided by Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital, the emergency scope and extent of the emergency services would have been *dramatically* reduced.
25. Tragically, Mishu was ultimately unable to recover from his injuries and I was forced to put him down on March 20, 2022.
26. How Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital failed to recognize a lesion of that size and severity in Mishu's mouth after "conducting an oral exam" and *specifically* being advised that he was experiencing pain in that region of the body, is *astonishing*.
27. Respectfully, the failure to diagnose – let alone the tragic misdiagnoses – Mishu's condition with any degree of accuracy falls well short of the skill, judgment, and expertise expected from a medical professional such as Dr. Avci, and from a facility such as Vistancia Animal Hospital.
28. Put simply, Dr. Avci and the Hospital committed malpractice, or were grossly negligent and/or reckless with respect to the alleged medical services they provided to Mishu.

29. As a result of that malpractice, Mishu was forced to undergo emergency medical procedures that would have been prevented or dramatically reduced. All of these procedures were provided by paying substantial sums of money – money that I spent in an effort to save my cat and to overcome the malpractice that he had been subjected to.
30. All of these facts have been laid out in detail to Vistancia Animal Hospital.
31. The day after Mishu's emergency surgery, I went to Vistancia Animal Hospital to share my concerns about the care that Mishu had received there. I spoke in person with Dr. Jason Long, Vistancia Animal Hospital's Interim Medical Director. He apologized profusely for Dr. Avci's negligence and assured me that I would be reimbursed for my visit to Vistancia Animal Hospital on March 3, 2022 as well as receive an apology from Dr. Avci.
32. I was reimbursed \$399.15 for the March 3, 2022 visit to Vistancia Animal Hospital and Dr. Avci called me personally to apologize for her mistakes.
33. Moreover, the Practice Manager of the facility, Astin Deem, has called me and outright admitted—on multiple occasions—that the Hospital did not provide adequate and reasonable care. Ms. Deem went so far as to say she *believes* that I should be reimbursed for the emergency services that I paid for at AZ Dental Specialists and AVECCC – she is apparently without authority to make such a decision, however.
34. Ms. Deem herself outlined *three* mistakes that Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital made while Mishu was in their care.
 - 1) Failing to conduct a competent oral exam on a cat that was so obviously suffering from oral pain. Frankly, there's no acceptable reason that a trained veterinarian (or anyone with a pair of eyes) could miss such an egregious lesion while examining the mouth. Even if Dr. Avci was unable to give a proper oral exam, she should have offered to sedate the cat so she *could* give a proper oral exam. Ms. Deem explained to me that's what should have happened. If Dr. Avci was truly incapacitated and inept without it, she should have offered an oral exam under anesthesia.
 - 2) Scheduling the dental surgery that Dr. Avci deemed necessary a full week later, after seeing an animal in such pain, was "outrageous."
 - 3) When I called back expressing that the pain medication Dr. Avci prescribed was not effective, she should have immediately asked me to bring Mishu back in to Vistancia Animal Hospital for further evaluation.

35. To her credit, Ms. Deem has been kind and unwaveringly supportive of me in my quest to find justice for Mishu. While I appreciate her efforts, no amount of retroactive kindness and expression of regret can alleviate the emotional grief I'm now experiencing from this incident.
36. As with most pet owners, Mishu was part of my family and I trusted his life and wellbeing with Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital. Mishu was entitled to receive – at a minimum – competent and professional care. No such care was provided.
37. To be sure, I tried to resolve this issue privately with Vistancia Animal Hospital. The Hospital reimbursed me for the costs it charged me, and advised Dr. Avci to apologize, which she did. Ms. Deem has acknowledged the direct impact of Dr. Avci's malpractice and gross negligence — going as far as to seek reimbursement for the costs of the emergency services through Vistancia Animal Hospital's insurance, though filed with a mismatched insurance policy that was ultimately denied.
38. I am certainly within my right to tell prospective customers of my experience – an experience that the Hospital's personnel has apologized for and recognized as falling woefully short of the standards of the profession.
39. I understand that the Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board can not enforce an animal hospital to reimburse customers for services provided by another animal hospital. It was, and remains, my hope that the true decision makers at Vistancia Animal Hospital will feel morally obligated to do the right thing and reimburse me for the emergency services after learning of such an egregious incident.
40. Therefore, I file this Complaint knowing that there can not be monetary reconciliation enforced by the Medical Examining Board. However, I can't move forward amid losing Mishu without ensuring that there's a public record of this incident.
41. Through gross negligence and malpractice Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital are responsible for the prolonged suffering of an innocent animal. It's shameful and horrifying that Dr. Avci continues to "care" for countless beloved pets in the Vistancia community.
42. I understand that Vistancia Animal Hospital currently has its application for a premises license pending.
43. The indisputable malpractice and gross negligence is not reflective of a business that warrants licensing approval.

44. Vistancia Animal Hospital's continued refusal to make this situation right is disheartening and reflective of a business that does not deserve the appearance of legitimacy that licensing would provide.
45. It's my hope that Dr. Avci and Vistancia Animal Hospital are held accountable for their incompetence in an adequate way.

Please find photos, videos, and medical records regarding this incident here. And please do not hesitate to reach out for any additional information.

9 May 2022

Memorandum for Record: "Mishu" Siegel

22-120, In Re: Nicole Avci, DVM

1. This memorandum is written to record events pertaining to the visit of "Mishu," an eleven-year-old Domestic Shorthair cat owned by Ms. Kalah Siegel, on 3 March 2022 at 1123 am. Mishu presented to Vistancia Animal Hospital for "chattering teeth, a foul smell from his mouth and not eating" of two days' duration. Mishu was brought to our clinic by his pet sitter. His owner, Ms. Siegel, was present remotely via video phone for the visit.

2. Upon presentation, Mishu was found to be bright, alert, and responsive, had a body condition score of 3.5/9 and was rather vocal. Mishu was drooling excessively and had an occasional chattering response to facial stimulation. While examining Mishu, I found it very difficult to examine his oral cavity. Mishu was very evasive and actively resisted me opening his mouth. I found it necessary to utilize a cotton swab to gently elevate his lips to examine his teeth, and then I utilized a tongue depressor to open his mouth and examine his oral cavity.

3. During examination, I discovered heavy dental tartar on Mishu's molar teeth. I examined the back of Mishu's mouth and did not detect any lesions, string foreign bodies or oral cavity masses. Again, examination was very difficult, and I had to make numerous attempts to see inside the cat's mouth.

4. Believing dental disease to be the cause of Mishu's clinical signs, I prescribed oral Buprenorphine for pain and administered a Convenia injection subcutaneously for an antibiotic. Blood was collected and sent to IDEXX Laboratories for a Feline Viral Plus panel, for pre-anesthetic blood work. An estimate for a dental prophylaxis was given to Ms. Siegel for Mishu. A dental prophylaxis was scheduled for Mishu for the following week.

5. The next day (4 March 2022), a request to forward Mishu's records to Arizona Veterinary Dental Specialists was submitted at 0811 am, which I approved. Then, at 0941 am, I called Ms. Siegel to discuss Mishu's partial blood work results. Blood work results were as follows: CBC: Reticulocyte Hg – 14.9 (L), WBC – 19.3 (H), Neutrophils – 15.44 (H), Monocytes – 0.579 (H), Basophils – 0.386 (H), rest WNL. Chemistry Panel: All WNL. TT4: 6.4 (H). Viral Panel: Pending.

6. During my conversation with Ms. Siegel, I recommended increasing Mishu's Methimazole dosage from one-half of a 5 mg tablet once daily to one-half of a 5 mg tablet twice daily, treat for 30 days, then recheck Mishu's total T4. Ms. Siegel concurred with my treatment plan.

7. Later that day (4 March 2022 at 1233 pm), Ms. Siegel called to report that her pet's Buprenorphine dosage "seemed to wear off much faster" and she wanted to know if she could dose it more frequently than every 12 hours. I informed her that she could dose

the Buprenorphine every 8 hours if she believed it was necessary to control her cat's pain.

8. I was next contacted by my office manager, Ms. Astin Deem, the following day (5 March 2022) at my home, regarding Mishu Siegel. I was informed that Ms. Siegel had come to our clinic to talk about her pet's case. During this conversation, Ms. Siegel mentioned Mishu's tongue lesion, originally believed to be a laceration. Ms. Deem informed me that we would speak further regarding the case on the following Monday.

9. On 7 March 2022, I discussed Mishu's case with Ms. Deem. She informed me that we would speak further about it on the following day, 8 March 2022, when I was present at work. On 8 March 2022, a conference call was made to Ms. Siegel regarding her pet's case. I was present during the telephone call, which also included Ms. Deem and Dr. Jason Long, our Medical Director. During the telephone call, we listened to Ms. Siegel discuss her pet's case. Afterwards, I apologized to Ms. Siegel for having not detecting her pet's tongue lesion during my examination.

10. Around 19 March 2022, I was informed that Mishu's biopsy results were Squamous Cell Carcinoma. I was also informed that Ms. Siegel had elected humane euthanasia for Mishu presumably in response to this finding.

11. If you have any questions regarding this case, please feel free to contact me at Vistancia Animal Hospital, 623-888-8108. You may reach me there from Tuesday through Friday from 0800 – 1800 and every other Saturday from 0800 – 1300. Outside of my regular work hours, you may reach me on my mobile telephone at [REDACTED]



NICOLE K. AVCI, DVM
Associate Veterinarian
Vistancia Animal Hospital

Douglas A. Ducey
- Governor -



Victoria Whitmore
- Executive Director -

ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

1740 W. Adams Street, Ste. 4600, Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Phone (602) 364-1-PET (1738) * FAX (602) 364-1039

vetboard.az.gov

INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board

FROM: PM Investigative Committee: Adam Almaraz - Chair
Amrit Rai, DVM
Steven Dow, DVM - **Telephonically**
Gregg Maura - **Absent**
Justin McCormick, DVM

STAFF PRESENT: Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT – Investigations
Marc Harris, Assistant Attorney General

RE: Case: 22-120
Complainant(s): Kalah Siegel
Respondent(s): Nicole Avci, DVM (License: 7765)

SUMMARY:

Complaint Received at Board Office: 4/15/22
Committee Discussion: 9/13/22
Board IIR: 10/26/22

APPLICABLE STATUTES AND RULES:

Laws as Amended August 2018
(Lime Green); Rules as Revised
September 2013 (Yellow)

On March 3, 2022, "Mishu," an 11-year-old male domestic short hair cat was presented to Respondent for chattering teeth, not eating, drooling and a foul odor from coming from his mouth. The cat was examined; a dental procedure was recommended and scheduled for the following week. The cat was discharged with oral pain management.

The next day due to the cat's continued pain, Complainant made an appointment with Arizona Dental Specialists. Additionally, she contacted Respondent to inquire about increasing the cat's pain medication.

Later that day, the cat was evaluated by Arizona Dental Specialists where severe inflammation and a laceration under the left side of the tongue were identified. The cat was anesthetized for radiographs, biopsy and surgical repair of the defect. A feeding tube was placed and the cat was transferred to an emergency service for overnight care.

On March 16, 2022, the cat was presented to Arizona Dental Specialists for a recheck. The cat continued to deteriorate; pathology results were consistent with squamous cell

carcinoma.

On March 20, 2022, the cat was humanely euthanized at home.

Complainant was noticed and appeared telephonically.

Respondent was noticed and appeared with attorney David Stoll.

The Committee reviewed medical records, testimony, and other documentation as described below:

- Complainant(s) narrative: *Kalah Siegel*
- Respondent(s) narrative/medical record: *Nicole Avci, DVM*
- Consulting Veterinarian(s) narrative/medical records: *Arizona Dental Specialists; AVECCC*

PROPOSED 'FINDINGS of FACT':

1. On March 3, 2022, the cat was presented to Respondent due to chattering teeth, not eating, drooling and a foul odor from coming from his mouth for approximately two days. Due to Complainant being out of town, the pet sitter brought the cat in. Complainant was present virtually via FaceTime. The cat was currently on prednisolone 3mg once a day, but had not received any since Tuesday; methimazole 5mg ½ tablet once a day; and gabapentin as needed. Upon exam, the cat had a weight = 6.2 pounds and BCS = 3.5/9; no temperature, pulse or respiration was noted. The cat was vocal, BAR; had generalized alopecia from excessive grooming; had heavy dental tartar (grade 4/4); was drooling and chattering.

2. According to Respondent, the cat was very resistant to having his mouth examined. Respondent used a cotton swab to gently elevate his lips to examine his teeth and a tongue depressor to open the cat's mouth to examine the oral cavity. Numerous attempts were made to see inside the cat's mouth as examination was very difficult. Respondent noted heavy dental tartar on the cat's molars; she did not detect any lesions, string foreign bodies or oral masses when examining the back of the cat's mouth.

3. Respondent believed dental disease was the cause of the cat's clinical symptoms and prescribed oral buprenorphine for pain and administered Convenia (0.3mL SQ) for an antibiotic. Blood was collected for testing and an estimate for a dental prophylaxis was provided to Complainant. The dental was scheduled for the cat the following week. The cat was discharged with buprenorphine 0.3mg/mL; 0.09mL each syringe – 14 syringes for a total of 1.26mL – squirt contents of one pre-filled syringe onto gums every 12 hours for 7 days.

4. That evening (after hours), the cat was still in pain therefore Complainant and the pet sitter called an emergency facility to inquire about the availability to perform an emergency dental procedure. Staff advised a dental procedure was not able to be performed that evening and recommended Complainant contact Arizona Dental Specialists.

5. On March 4, 2022, Respondent received a request for the cat's medical records to be sent to Arizona Dental Specialists, which Respondent approved. A short time later, Respondent

contacted Complainant with partial blood results. During this conversation, Respondent recommended Complainant increase the methimazole dosage to ½ 5mg tablet twice a day.

6. A couple hours later, Complainant called Respondent to report the cat's buprenorphine dosage appeared to wear off faster and asked if it could be given more frequently than every 12 hours. Respondent approved give the buprenorphine every 8 hours if needed to control pain.

7. The cat was presented to Dr. Jucan at Arizona Dental Specialists for a second opinion as an emergency walk-in. The pet sitter advised Dr. Jucan of the cat's history – medical records and blood work were available for review. The cat had not improved after treatment. Upon exam, Dr. Jucan found moderate plaque, calculus and gingivitis – no signs of stomatitis were noted. She further identified severe inflammation and a laceration under the left side of the tongue, with pain on opening the mouth. It was unclear how the laceration occurred and after consulting with her team, Dr. Jucan elected to help the cat that was in obvious and severe pain. An estimate/treatment plan was provided that included a thorough oral exam under anesthesia, intraoral radiographs, collect a biopsy sample of the abnormal sublingual tissue and attempt surgical repair of the defect.

8. Under anesthesia, Dr. Jucan found severe glossitis on the left ventral aspect of the tongue with a deep laceration – 2.5cm long and 1.5cm deep. A biopsy was collected for histopathology, a swab was collected for culture and sensitivity, and an esophageal feeding tube was placed to ensure supplemental nutrition while recovering. The cat was transferred to the emergency service (Arizona Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Center – AVECCC) for overnight care and monitoring.

9. While at AVECCC, the cat remained stable, tolerated his esophagostomy tube feedings well and began voluntarily taking his liquid diet by mouth.

10. On March 5, 2022, Complainant went to Respondent's premises and spoke with the medical director, Dr. Long. According to Complainant, Dr. Long apologized for Respondent not identifying the lesion and reimbursed fees associated with Respondent's services provided. He further advised that she would get an apology from Respondent as well.

11. Office manager, Ms. Deem, called Respondent at home to advise her of what transpired with the cat and Complainant's concerns.

12. On March 7, 2022, Ms. Deem spoke with Complainant. Complainant expressed concern that Respondent did not look in the cat's mouth or she would have seen the large laceration on the cat's tongue. She was never asked if the cat could be sedated to do a more complete exam. Additionally, Complainant stated that when she called back to advise Respondent that the cat was still very painful; she was not offered a recheck or provided

with a recommendation to take the cat to an emergency facility.

13. On March 8, 2022, a conference call was made to Complainant which included Dr. Long, Ms. Deem and Respondent. They listened to Complainant discuss the cat's case and afterwards Respondent apologized for not finding the cat's tongue lesion during her examination.

14. On March 7th and March 9th, the cat was presented to Dr. Jucan for follow-up exams.

15. On March 16, 2022, the cat was presented to Dr. Jucan with drooling and teeth chattering. The cat's condition was deteriorating slowly. The pathology lab was contacted and the lab results were obtained – the lesion was consistent with squamous cell carcinoma and the culture showed an infection resistant to most common antibiotics. Dr. Jucan discussed the cat's grave prognosis with Complainant and palliative care was recommended.

16. On March 20, 2022, the cat was humanely euthanized at home.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee discussed that they had no issues with the care and treatment Respondent provided. A dental was scheduled and at that time, there did not appear to be a need to refer the cat to an emergency facility. The cat would be thoroughly evaluated while under anesthesia for the dental procedure. Respondent did not have support staff or time in her schedule to evaluate the cat under anesthesia that day.

Follow up conversations were had and adjustments in pain medication was made. However, some Committee members felt that a referral to a dental specialist should have been made when the dental could not be performed sooner than one week.

COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED CONCLUSIONS of LAW:

The Committee concluded that no violations of the Veterinary Practice Act occurred.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION:

Motion: It was moved and seconded the Board:

Dismiss this issue with no violation.

Vote: The motion was approved with a vote of 4 to 1, with Dr. Dow opposed.

The information contained in this report was obtained from the case file, which includes the complaint, the respondent's response, any consulting veterinarian or witness input, and any other sources used to gather information for the investigation.

TR

Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT
Investigative Division